

Jelena Novak

Opera on the Horizon of Postminimalism

Abstract:

In his essay “A Forest from the Seeds of Minimalism”, Kyle Gann discusses developments of postminimal techniques in various musical poetics that came after the era of strict minimalist procedures. Similarly to Gann, my aim is to consider ‘what came after’ minimalist music, although my discussions extends also to the visual arts. I will zoom in on what is happening to postminimalism in recent opera productions that further redefine the world of opera. This includes works by less central figures than those whose works had a major impact on postminimalist operatic aesthetics, such as Glass, Andriessen, Reich and Adams. Some of the postoperas I would like to discuss are: operatic installations by Marguerite Humeau, Claudia Molitor, Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller; ‘television operas after TV’ where opera and television reinvent each other (minute operas by Michel van der Aa and the reality opera *The News* by Jacob ter Veldhuis (Jacob TV), *Invisible Cities* an opera for headphones by Yuval Sharon and Christopher Cerrone, and the opera *Two Boys* by Nico Muhly. The status of postminimalism in each of these works will be examined in order to see how and why its functions in opera change.

Biography:

Jelena Novak works in the area of musicology, opera studies, performance studies, dramaturgy and criticism. She is a postdoctoral research fellow at CESEM, New University of Lisbon with the project "Opera beyond Drama". She was a founding Committee member of the Society for Minimalist Music and a founding member of the editorial collective TkH [Walking Theory]. In 2013 she won the Thurnau Award for Music-Theatre Studies. She is author of the book *Postopera: Reinventing the Voice-Body* (Ashgate, 2015), and is currently co-editing (with John Richardson) the book *Einstein on the Beach: Opera beyond Drama* for the Ashgate Interdisciplinary Studies in Opera series.